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THE MUSEUM:

A Poem.

BY

JOHN BULL.

"Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanity of vanities, all is vanity."

LONDON:

PUBLISHED BY TAYLOR AND HESSEY,

93, FLEET-STREET, AND 13, WATERLOO-PLACE, PALL-MALL.

1824.

CAVE, PRINTER, ISLINGTON.

PR
4267
B81m

PREFACE.

The following stanzas are founded on the treasures of the British Museum, which contains subjects sufficiently interesting and important, to form the foundation of a great poem; but whether the thoughts which they suggest are here well embodied, time and the public judgment, under the overruling providence of God, will determine. The author of the present work, published some time since, in the London Magazine, a few verses on the Elgin Marbles, which, as far as his information extends, were well received; and as their form and spirit are of an order in unison with those of this projected poem, they will probably be built up into the same, that the whole may stand or fall together.

9 9 9 8 3 4 7

With great difficulty I have brought this portion of my work to a close; the labour of writing it, combined with the exertion necessary to be made in filling up the duties of my sphere, together with the mental anguish I have been called to endure, these things had well nigh proved too much for my bodily strength.

The period of the commencement of this poem is not soon to be forgotten, for it was a time of deep distress, when I was suddenly called to follow the remains of my father to the tomb; and it is concluded in an hour of sorrow, for I am now mourning on account of the loss of my dearest and most intimate friend. We had long watched over each other's interests with affectionate solicitude, and just as my desires and expectations were brightening into reality, he was carried to an early grave, and his soul, I doubt not, joined the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven.

To my Father's Memory, and to the Memory of the Rev. Stephen Morell, I therefore Dedicate these Pages.

Spa-Fields—1824.

THE SLAVE, and OTHER POEMS. By the same Author.

THE MUSEUM.

CANTO I.

A PAUSE AT THE ENTRANCE.

I.

I LOOK upon a noble tomb! Lo, here,
The fine remains of all antiquity,
The rich works of the resting dead appear,
Clothed with a glory, ages hence to die!
Heroes of art! Around, their labours lie,
Like spell-bound fragments of their vanish'd lives—
Moments immortal made whilst fleeting by,
Treasur'd by Fame, whose power old age survives,
And from the lapse of years a reverend strength derives.

II.

The place is hallowed by its solemn trust,
Bequeath'd us by the fallen great and wise;
Whose frames, dissolved, are mingling with the dust,
And their wing'd souls escap'd into the skies!
With how much state these buildings seem to rise,
When looked on as the consecrated halls,
Where Science, resting from her labour lies,
With Memory by her side on whom she calls,
And Art to range her spoils around the sacred walls!

III.

Are there no heav'nly visitants, that leave
The gates of their celestial realms, what time
Pale Venus sits upon the throne of eve,
To listen to the plaintive vesper's chime?
Are there no spirits from some far-off clime,
Up in the fair spheres of eternal day,
Loving to linger o'er these wrecks sublime,
Of Genius, parted from the earth away,
And minds, that sever'd are, from homes of crumbling clay?

IV.

Are there no secret, silent, visits paid,
At midnight, and by moonlight, to this spot,
By souls of ancient men, whose bones were laid,
Long ages since, within their tombs to rot?
Their memories, likewise, many an age forgot!
The people in the nether world that dwell,
Though once the denizens of this, do not
Their pondering ghosts o'erstep death's narrow spell,
And meet within this place, of former times to tell?

V.

Some might look in their emptied urns, design'd,
The ashes of their clay-built home to hold,
Which thousand years ago they left behind,
To enter upon myst'ries still untold—
Death and the grave alone can them unfold!
Some to dark Egypt's treasures might repair,
And see the coffins of gigantic mould,
Which it was meant their kings, when dead, should share,
Though centuries have claps'd since they were slumb'ring there!

VI.

O could we meet the spirits of the past!
If ever in this temple they are seen;
What floods of knowledge might their legends cast
Over these shades of glory which hath been!
How might we, from their tales of sorrow, glean,
Hints of lost truths which learning seeks in vain!
Discover what those mystic writings mean,
Engraven deeply in the granite's grain,
Yet, wrapp'd in grave-like gloom, secure from light remain!

VII.

Perchance, if we could join such ghostly throng,
Their thrilling whispers might in part make known,
To whom the embalmed effigies belong,
O'er which the pall of silence hath been thrown,
Whilst years and ages o'er the world have flown,
And look'd on empires into deserts made,
And deserts into mighty empires grown,
All since those bodies were in shrouds array'd,
Still standing on the earth, though dead, yet undecay'd!

VIII.

But these are fancies, and this ward of art,
May never boast of an untombed guest,
Wand'ring amidst these ruins, to impart
The secrets of the grave! Let the dead rest!
And, ah! that all their souls with peace were blest!
Turn we to muse on those whose living feet,
The hallowed pavement of these halls have prest;
For this is Learning's, Science', Art's retreat,
And, for immortal ends, within these walls they meet!

IX.

Here may you see, full oft, with brow serene,
Philosophy, her fine and pensive eye,
Roving in silence round the solemn scene,
Which rich food doth unto her soul supply,
And seeds of giant thought, whose fruit shall vie
With the productions of the mighty dead;
They, whose remains in great profusion lie,
Over this splendid mausoleum spread;
Strewing with time-wreck'd skill the ground whereon we tread.

X.

Here Meditation, too, is oft beheld,
Slow walking, grave Philosophy beside;
And you may see that her chaste bosom's swell'd,
With feelings strong, to mournfulness allied,
And large ideas that stretch their pinions wide,
Far spreading o'er the shadowy past, and o'er
The still more ample future, dim descried,
Like to some distant visionary shore,
Where temples built by Hope, crumble to dust no more!

XI.

Some Muse, not seldom, bears them company,
Whose brilliant eye with heav'nly light is fill'd,
Rolling with sweet poetic majesty;
And whose most intellectual glances, gild
The works whereon they rest; for she is skill'd,
To gather living beauties from the grave,
And with the fragments she obtains, to build
A fairy structure, beautiful and brave,
Sweet as an Iris' bower, arch'd o'er an evening wave!

XII.

Sometimes, perchance, though not so oft we fear,
Soul-royal Piety adorns their train;
Whom vilest minds, in their worst moods, revere,
And in her presence feel instinctive pain!
So fair is she, all beauty seemeth vain,
Which her sweet smile doth not illuminate;
And ev'n Philosophy may not obtain,
Such awe-struck fame as on her steps await,
But veil'd is by the light of her celestial state!

XIII.

And there is active Knowledge with them found,
A gay-born nymph, yet not devoid of grace
Viewing with curious eye the scene around,
Perusing well the wonders of the place,
And searching every record there, to trace,
What truths may lie conceal'd from casual sight;
Long buried in oblivion's cold embrace,
Slumb'ring with Time through his perpetual night,
Which Knowledge, like a star, illumines with her light!

XIV.

And Wisdom, her preceptress, near her stands,
With brow most like to Piety divine!
The gifts of Knowledge, fill her seraph hands,
Who doth to her, those varied works consign:
Well doth she ponder each elaborate line,
Casting the worthless from the good away;
And Knowledge, though full oft she may repine,
The laws severe of Wisdom to obey,
Yet doth she flourish best beneath her virgin sway.

XV.

These all most unobtrusive seem, and walk
The marble halls about, with silent feet;
And in low whispers of those wonders talk,
That in these dwellings of the ancient meet!
And students to this tomb of art retreat,
Seeking to catch the spirit of the past;
Here, day by day, they thoughtful take their seat,
A resurrection to effect at last,
Of all those master-works, by Death's shade overcast.

XVI.

But others of a less ennobled class,
Within these awful precincts will intrude:
Dull-featured Ignorance is seen to pass
Through these free portals, with a footstep rude,
Marring the stillness of a solitude,
Whereon with silent awe the wisest gaze—
And there she makes her observations crude,
Looking along the walls with void amaze,
Or loading what she sees with most unwelcome praise.

XVII.

And to this birth-place of the future wise,
Will Folly come, that most unthoughtful maid!
With Vanity, of fashionable guise,
All in gay garments, childishly display'd,
Around these halls of greatness to parade;
And, worse than all, accompanied by Mirth,
Whose hollow peals the vaulted roofs invade,
As if light laughter, meteor of the earth,
Rose from amidst the wrecks of minds of heav'nly birth.

XVIII.

'Twere endless labour to enumerate
The motley tribes, their way that hither wend;
Coming to look upon the lofty state,
Of other lands and ages, and to spend
A vacant hour among their dead, that lend,
In the great glory of their mental might,
A lustre to the world, till time shall blend
With the new rising of eternal light,
Over the star-lit gloom of this life's lingering night!

XIX.

Alas, for man! His triumphs are but vain,
When 'neath the yoke of death his neck is bow'd!
Lo, then, the meanest living may profane,
The works of which his soul was once so proud!
Here we behold his glory in her shroud,
And see the brow of genius, cold yet fair,
Stain'd by the rude touch of the vulgar crowd;
All heedless of the beauty slumb'ring there,
In which their souls can have no shadow of a share!

XX.

But let the Muse a theme more grateful seek,
And tell how virtuous Beauty here is found;
Smiling, yet modest—lively, yet most meek,
Her head, perchance, with regal honours crown'd!
For know ye not, that this art-hallowed ground
Oft echoes to the tread of princely feet,
Whose natal halls our English homes surround,
Where patriot hearts with loyal freedom beat,
Ready, for England's weal, to man her guardian fleet!

XXI.

This is Art's tomb, but still the monument
Of a great nation's gratitude, to those,
Whose labouring lives were in the service spent,
Of a far-fallen world, and who thus chose,
In lieu of calm and ignoble repose,
To lift on high their country's prostrate name,
And leave, until the book of time shall close,
Some few memorials of their noble aim,
To be revered by all the future sons of fame!

XXII.

I love to seat me on some mouldering stone,
Some relic of the mighty days of yore:
There to recline and meditate alone,
Upon the grandeur of the dead, and pore
Over their giant memories, and o'er
Those soul-enshrining works which still remain,
Reminding us that now we may deplore,
The fall of many in the Muses' train,
Whose absence leaves a void, time scarce shall fill again.

XXIII.

Here the soul stands, and ponders on the past,
Held by the spirit of another clime,
And of an age long since from life outcast,
Lost mid the multiplying wrecks of Time!
Here she exults in visions most sublime,
Or looks in sadness on the mighty's fate,
Whose lives were seal'd up in their very prime,
Or whilst the plaudits of a world might wait
Upon the brightening march of their protracted state!

XXIV.

Egypt, Greece, Rome, whose thrones have been the world,
Hither the relics of their greatness send;
To tell, their towering fame is not yet hurl'd
From life's domains, but that they still contend
With the usurping throng, that fain would rend
Their glory from their stiffen'd grasp, and rive
The rev'rend honours from their brows, to lend
Their own a graceful lustre, and to give
Their names a place with those that shall hereafter live.

XXV.

This is a chamber to the soul, wherein
Solemn she muses, from the world retired,
And from Time's eye; and shut out from the din
Of present things, until she hath acquired
Acquaintance with the dead who once aspired,
As men do now, to an immortal fame,
And with the frenzy of ambition fired,
Fought for the little triumph of a name,
And sacrificed their souls, such vague reward to claim!

XXVI.

But, hush—all were not so: for there were some,
That bled in Liberty's thrice noble cause;
And these shall live for many an age to come,
The guardian names of truthful Freedom's laws!
Time, o'er their faults, a veil in silence draws,
But brings their brilliant virtues forth to view,
With a majestic force, which overawes
The soul that would their sun-like track pursue—
These were Earth's noble sons! Of such, alas! how few!

XXVII.

With sad memorials this temple teems,
Relics of glory falling to decay!
Rich as the fragments of those broken dreams,
Which, when the soul of youth hath pass'd away,
Do still about the halls of Memory lay,
Dear to the labouring heart! Like these they flee,
Becoming fainter still from day to day,
Till, in the lapse of years, the world may see
No more of these, perchance, than those which are to be!

XXVIII.

For future things, and past, shall into one
Hereafter mingle, and a later age,
Though still enlightened by yon lasting sun,
Shall read of those whose labours now engage
Our thought-engend'ring souls, upon the page
Of mutilated legends; and the young
Shall sweetly listen, while some hoary sage
Tells them of long-lost works, their praises sung,
By bards, with whose renown age after age hath rung.

XXIX.

Oh, what a fruitful subject have we found;
Germe of a thousand tales! For there doth dwell,
With every fragment on this haunted ground,
Shadows of many spirits, like a spell,
Working on kindred souls; and they compel
The living to revere the fame-clothed dead,
Whilst of the triumphs of their minds they tell;
Illustrious as the light, now sweetly shed
Over their lofty works, in ruins here outspread.

XXX.

Turn in and speak not, for the dead reside,
Shrined in their own bright works, within this place!
Embalm'd with honours, here they still abide,
Lying in endless state! And you may trace
The mental features of a mighty race,
By looking on the relics of their skill,
Which the strong arms of this great fane embrace;
Whose ancient halls such gems of science fill,
As might adorn a temple on Parnassus' hill!

XXXI.

Nature and art their treasures here combine;
And marbles, and sepulchral vases, meet,
Beneath this roof, with fruits of many a mine—
Jewels, and minerals, that grace the feet
Of monarch mountains—and those insects sweet,
That wing the sun-beams of each orient vale—
And reptiles strange—and beasts, whose wild retreat
Is where the morn no human eye doth hail—
And birds of alien plume, 'neath foreign skies that sail!

XXXII.

Monarchs, and more illustrious bards, have here
Their marble representatives; admired,
As they themselves were, when, in this our sphere,
Their bright souls dwelt, in mortal flesh attired—
The beauteous shrine from whence their minds inspired,
Like oracles, the listening world, and gain'd
The ear of proudest nations, and acquired
A lordly name, which o'er the earth long reign'd—
Behold the small remains of what such power obtain'd!

XXXIII.

The world is but a haunted sepulchre,
Where men like spirits dwell, and rove among
The graves of those, whose energies might stir,
In times by-gone, with eloquence of song,
Or noble deeds, or arguments more strong,
Whole nations up to glorious works! And they
Glide off into their waiting tombs, ere long,
For others, in their turn, thus making way—
So phantom forms retire before the advancing day!

XXXIV.

And life is like a star-lit night, which sin,
At oft returning intervals, doth shroud;
Leaving us, as with prison'd time, shut in,
Whelm'd by the darkness of a moral cloud;
The which, those minds with brightest thoughts endow'd,
Hardly with one lone ray illuminate,
Ere they themselves beneath Death's power have bow'd,
And tearful honours on their urns await—
Ere those that drank their light, regret their timeless fate!

XXXV.

What then are all the galleries of art—
The treasuries of knowledge? Are they not
The tombs of vanish'd genius, where a part
Of her embodied thoughts repose? And what
Are all the riches of this hallowed spot—
This temple, on whose threshold now we tread?—
Fragments of many a nation's fame, whose lot
Is now to be with barbarous hosts o'erspread,
Though sons they *had*, whose names reign o'er the ancient dead!

XXXVI.

Here let ambition pause, that blazing star,
Whose fervent path with quenchless heat doth burn;
As when hot Noon, upon her sultry car,
Rides o'er the panting world! Here let her learn,
To drink cool wisdom from the dead man's urn—
That marble cup which Nature fills with tears,
As her sweet children to the dust return;
Struck down in youth, or from the mount of years,
Where, full of fame, they stood beside their brave compeers!

XXXVII.

Our mourning thoughts, when on these works we gaze,
Beget rich fruits of wisdom; and the tears,
Dropt o'er the vanities of other days,
Are gracious as the dew of twilight spheres,
Which, though in darkness born, the soul it cheers!
From solemn meditation joy doth grow,
Maturing, like the oak, with length of years;
And, if the love of heav'n therewith we know,
Then, though Death cut it down, it ceaseth not to blow.

XXXVIII.

'Tis not time lost, to talk with antique lore,
And all the labours of the dead: for thence
The musing mind may bring an ample store
Of thoughts, that will her labours recompense.
The dead hold converse with the soul, and hence,
He that communeth with them, doth obtain
A partial conquest over time, from whence
The soul departs, for ever to remain,
Where life, with all its pomp, appeareth worse than vain.

XXXIX.

Turn, turn, from earth to heav'n, for here we find
That all is vanity: and we are taught,
By these best treasures of the world, to bind,
With everlasting truth, each new-born thought;
That, when the glories of this life are nought,
As now in Wisdom's eye they all appear,
With wealth divine our spirits may be fraught,
Then resident in some yet unknown sphere—
The praise of living men, no more to heed or hear.

XL.

There is a better hope than mortal gain,
To which immortal spirits may aspire,
Whose substance all, if willing, may obtain,
Whose help each soul hereafter will require:
For Justice, armed with a sword of fire,
In judgment on this crime-heap'd world shall rise;
And myriads, in that dread hour, shall desire,
When waked from death, to look on flaming skies,
That they in life had fled to Christ, their sacrifice.

END OF CANTO I.

CANTO II.

THE MUSEUM.

CANTO II.

THE EGYPTIAN GALLERY.

I.

Old Egypt! In the still and midnight hour,
When, through yon casements' tall and narrow panes,
The moon-beams steal into this marble bower,
To watch, like spirits, round the huge remains
Of the dark grandeur of thine ancient plains,
Whereon thy Pharaohs held despotic sway,
Barbarian splendour filling up their reigns,
And mystic glory, long since pass'd away,
From temples and proud halls, sublime in their decay.—

II.

Old Egypt! Here at such an hour I'd muse,
Some cold sarcophagus my throne of thought,
Where dwelt the vanish'd dead! Here would I lose
All consciousness of mortal things, till nought,
Save the dread visions of the past, were brought
Before my silent soul, and her cleans'd sight,
The shadow of thine old renown had caught;
Seen in dim state amidst the dubious light,
Thrown by the spectral moon athwart the realms of night!

III.

Then might these fragments of past greatness, tell
Tales of thy monarchs, mingled with the dust!
Ah! frail remains of some time-broken spell,
Now to the verge of dark oblivion thrust,
Though once deem'd worthy to uphold the trust
Of artist's skill, and hero's blood-earn'd fame!
Yet the rude relic of colossal bust,
Or demon form, unworthy of a name,
Ere now, hath well nigh fail'd, one passing sigh to claim!

IV.

The pyramids, thy giant tombs, still stand
Upon the burning deserts, where of old
Their vast foundations were, beneath the sand,
Laid by a thousand hands of mortal mould,
Whose labours, by despotic power controll'd,
Built for the living and the future dead!
These, in dark vision, we might here behold,
Rising amidst our thoughts, as they were led,
Among these granite wrecks, by silence deep and dread,

V.

Which walks at midnight on this marble floor,
And, in dumb wonder, with an eye of stone,
Gazes on ruin'd grandeur, now no more
Making the worship of a world its own,
But seated, as with Death, upon a throne,
Rear'd with the relics of its ancient reign,
From which the laugh of life long since hath flown;
Of whose rich lustre, little doth remain,
Save remnants of old power, ne'er to revive again!

VI.

Thy black magicians, Egypt! where are they?
Bring forth their charming-wands, that we may raise
Their dark and bearded forms, in grim array,
As they were wont to frown on former days;
When, by their star-fix'd and mysterious gaze,
The hearts of mighty men wax'd wondrous weak,
And tyrant monarchs, stricken with amaze,
Of fate-doom'd future heard the sorcerers speak,
When of their midnight dreams, the burden they would seek!

VII.

Where do the cabalistic masters dwell—
The princes of the hell-born science, where?
Let the dread forms of yonder mummies tell,
Which, like immortal statues of despair,
Swath'd in their spell-wrought shrouds, oblivion dare!
Ask *them* where Egypt's prophets may be found,
For they were dwelling with the mighty there,
Ere Thebes the ancient, o'er the world renown'd,
In overwhelming seas of desert sand was drown'd!

VIII.

Ages on ages, like the advancing waves
Of ever-widening seas, have overswept
The dim memorials of a nation's graves,
Wherein the ashes of her sons are kept,
Who, in embalmed state, long years have slept
In the unconscious chambers of the dead
Damp with the tears by widow'd Science wept,
And by full many a learned pilgrim shed,
Within the cavern'd tombs, oft echoing with their tread!

IX.

We ask in vain the mystery of the past:
The dead, though well preserved, are silent all!
A sullen stillness hath their homes o'ercast,
And, on the dark roof of each vaulted hall,
The wizard bats cling round the rocky wall,
For nought is there to break their constant sleep!
In vain upon the shrouded forms we call,
Whose voiceless scorn but makes the living weep!
The counsel they've received, with stern resolve they keep!

X.

Egypt, the ruin of a nation, stands,
Crumbling upon the deserts, whence she rose,
The earliest work of Art's time-wearying hands,
Whose labours seek no guerdon of repose,
Till the vast volume of the world shall close,
And the sun's bright and ever-wakeful eye
Shall cease to read the record of its woes,
Pass'd, like a storm-cloud from an April sky,
Where tempests on the wings of summer breezes fly!

XI.

Yea, Egypt is a ruin; and the halls,
Wherein it is our lot to meditate,
Hold relics of a grandeur, which appals
The soul that muses on her tomb-like fate:
Foretelling what vain-glorious meeds await
The fame-crown'd energies of human pride,
Whose triumphs are of such a transient date—
Unto Oblivion's conquests near allied,
With which they hold debate, or slumber side by side!

XII.

How soon a nation's proud schemes are forgot,
When the wild chorus of her life is o'er!
Here are the idols, but the priests are not!
Their hoary forms are seen on earth no more,
Stain'd with brute blood, perchance with human gore,
The dread libation to some demon god,
Which Superstition's hand was prone to pour
In lands, obedient to those tyrant's nod,
Whose annals are enwrapp'd in hieroglyphics odd—

XIII.

The written symbols of a mystic tongue—
Rude-pictured thoughts, the wing of time hath veil'd!
O'er which the muse of learning long hath hung,
Though to decypher them her skill hath fail'd!
Oblivion over Art hath here prevail'd,
And, in stern triumph, borne away the name
Of priest, or king, whose fiats once were hail'd,
And echoed by the hungry trump of Fame,
Feeding alike on deeds of glory or of shame!

XIV.

Fragments of mortal forms are spread around
This decorated sepulchre of art;
Wherein the rude resemblances are found,
Of men, that now in this world have no part—
Deserted chambers of their souls, whence dart
No glances of the spirit, nor the rays
Of life-illuminating thoughts, which start,
At intervals, from earth, ere life decays,
And on celestial visions fix their dazzling gaze!

XV.

The palaces of many minds are here,
Deserted by their lords, whose dwelling-place
Is now transferr'd to some less changeful sphere;
Whilst the rude rites of restless years deface
Their ancient habitations, where we trace
Their fading footsteps, in the avenues,
Which their enkindling thoughts were wont to grace,
With the love-charms of life's delicious hues,
Though ruins they've become, wherein of death we muse!

XVI.

And the fair portals, whence of old they peer'd
Over the realms of Nature, now appear
As marble relics, evermore unchcer'd
By the sweet touch of life, once fresh and clear
As the spring smile of a rich-guerdon'd year—
The orbit where the eye roll'd like a star,
Filling, with cheerful light, its lovely sphere,
Stored well with beauty, brought in from afar,
And made unto a fairy's dwelling similar—

XVII.

Those chambers, too, which Nature's melodies,
Of fragrant breath, were wont of old to fill,
Waiting an audience of the soul —all these,
Here represented by the artist's skill,
Remind us of the men of old; but still,
More like to tombs than temples do they seem,
And call up thoughts of undefined ill;
Like the wan forms of some unearthly dream,
Which set the soul on thirst for morn's heart-cheering beam.

XVIII.

We look around this place, and know not where
Our meditation to begin or end!
Idols of horrid form, and hideous air,
Like demons on our wand'ring thoughts attend!
On these we gaze, and marvel men could bend
The knee, such grim and savage shapes before;
And, howsoever dark, that they should lend
Their souls to such base service, and adore
These works, whose aspect seems the vilest art e'er wore.

XIX.

Mummies, adorn'd with colour'd beads of glass,
Taken from coffins standing by their side,
Plead for our notice, as we onward pass,
Along these chambers where the dead abide!
Nor should the pilgrim's pity be denied,
Nor ev'n the muses' tears, where Death and Time
Have thus, with Love's last efforts, been defied,
On the dim borders of their own dark clime—
Stealing a mournful triumph, transient, yet sublime!

XX.

'Twas thus the ancient world, when art was young,
Strove her dead children to immortalize;
And to their soul's late temples fondly clung,
Perhaps not knowing they were in the skies!
Ah, me! how vainly weeping nature tries,
Her fleeting offspring on the earth to keep!
For lo, alas! each generation dies,
Like a spent billow in the stormy deep;
And what to Love is left, save o'er their dust to weep!

XXI.

Yet are these mummies, partial triumphs, too,
Samples of Nature's tenderness and power!
It is not much, but all that she could do,
So to prepare them for the grave's cold bower,
And cheat, in part, Destruction of his dower!
And we, a sorrowing lesson may receive,
Who now are filling up life's later hour,
When, for awhile, the bustling world we leave,
To look upon these dead, and o'er earth's troubles grieve!

XXII.

Lo, these embalmed people, walk'd the streets
Of cities, which have likewise pass'd away!
Nor History herself their name repeats;
And where they stood no mortal tongue can say!
Fame, annals, life, alike gone to decay!
And who are these, the aromatic dead?
Noble, or learn'd, or unrenown'd were they?
Alas! we know not!—All that can be said,
Is, that on earth they dwelt, and thence their spirits fled!

XXIII.

Here lies a bust of most enormous size,
A ruin, from a ruin'd city brought!
Dragg'd from a fallen temple, where still lies,
Immoveable, it's huge remainder, wrought,
Ev'n by its own dead weight, with help of nought,
Deep down into the burning desert sand;
Yet rear'd for him who with Achilles fought,
And fell in presence of his armed band!
The Æthiop Memnon, fam'd through every age and land!

XXIV.

This Memnon was a mighty man of yore,
Son of the Morning and Tithonus bright,
Who with Aurora dwells for evermore,
A young cicada singing in her sight,
Charm'd by the sweet spell of her lovely light!—
He was a Trojan warrior, and his glance
Review'd ten thousand men, all strong for fight,
Waiting till he should bid each rank advance,
And, in the crowded combat, take a soldier's chance.

XXV.

And Memnon fell into a hero's grave,
Beneath the death-stroke of a valiant foe!
And yet his people held him great and brave,
As Egypt in her dying hour can show,
Though one more strong than he had laid him low!
There was a temple in his honour rear'd,
And travellers the place thereof still know,
Dispread with wrecks, by pilgrim hands half clear'd,
Upon the site where once Thebes in her pride appear'd!

XXVI.

Aurora, Memnon bore! She is all light,
And youthful loveliness, whilst his great name,
Lives in the darkness of Egyptian night,
Lighting, as with a dim sepulchral flame,
The gloomy grandeur of a warrior's fame,
Long standing mid the wrecks of many years,
Now unto ages grown, whose heroes claim
The guerdon of our towering nation's tears,
Ris'n, like a late-born star, among the ancient spheres.

XXVII.

Our native land, some think, is growing old,
And near advancing to that hour of need,
Which our forefathers, in their day, foretold,
Might quickly to her glorious reign succeed!
And now of them their late descendants read,
As men who lived in times long since gone by;
And the full fame of many a valiant deed,
Wrought by their hands, ere they were call'd to die,
Seems fading fast away, like twilight from the sky!

XXVIII.

They had their merry days, when birds were singing,
From early morn till evening's dewy close:
And long they listened, while the bells were ringing,
Or danced until the summer moon arose,
To light them homeward to their sweet repose!
Now of their lives we read in olden lore,
And round their graves the bearded thistle grows:
Deep are their slumbers, and they hear no more
The mellow evening bells, still ringing as of yore!

XXIX.

Abbots and Templars, barons, bards, and kings—
Shadows of times remote—have pass'd away!
The minstrel sweeps no more his silent strings,
When Evening sleeps upon the mountain grey,
Or Morn throws wide the pearl-built gates of day!
Echoes no more the loud and lordly hall!
Listens no lady fair to love-lorn lay,
Sweet as the moon-light in a fountain's fall!
Dreams, dreams of elder days, for tears alone that call!

XXX.

The pilgrims sleep within their narrow cells!
And generations, mingled with the dead,
Like them oft heard the melancholy bells,
And tears on their forefathers' ashes shed!
And many a live-long night the moon hath spread
Her lovely veil of light o'er hill and plain,
Since these were borne unto their lowly bed,
From whence they never more shall rise again,
Till Death himself is dead, and Time completes his reign!

XXXI.

And all these things seem ancient! Yet the page
Of history was old when these occurr'd!
And Egypt's glory had, for many an age
Ere then, been on her pyramids conferr'd!
And long before had new-born nations heard
The echoes loud of Egypt's hoary fame;
And ev'n these recent realms, a mere by-word
To other lands, long ere these days became,
For Greece had lost her life, and Rome her royal name!

XXXII.

Albion leans on her ancient tombs, and weeps!
And these are trembling with their weight of years!
But here, where Egypt's giant grandeur sleeps,
She like an infant of the world appears,
Or virgin, bath'd in youth's affecting tears!
And that which *here* antiquity we deem,
And which, as such, the pilgrim soul reveres—
This, view'd beside Egyptian eld, doth seem
Well nigh too fresh to form a minstrel's reverend theme!

XXXIII.

This solemn store, whereon with awe we gaze,
As from the tomb for veneration calls;
And tells, that for these wrecks, our hands should raise
Some place, resembling more their native halls!
No new-cut stones should form the rising walls,
Nor modern marble, grace the spreading floor;
No columns, crown'd with Grecian capitals,
Nor caryatides, the roofs explore;
Nor Art, in Roman robes, stand waiting at the door!

XXXIV.

All should Egyptian be—a solitude,
Unlike all others form'd—unique, yet grand:
Rear'd like barbarian temples, greatly rude,
Wanting the polish of the classic hand:
The pillars, simple and sublime should stand,
Upstarting from an aged granite base,
And form'd of rough wrecks, gather'd from the land,
Where lived and died the great and gloomy race,
By whom of old were wrought the wonders of this place.

XXXV.

Such should the temple be—worthy of those,
Whose hands the sea-like lake of Mœris made;
Whereto th' exuberant wealth of Nilus flows,
And 'neath whose waves, as hath of yore being said,
Foundations of two pyramids were laid,
Which far above the waste of waters tower'd;
Whilst on their top, as on two thrones display'd,
Two marble giants o'er the waters lower'd,
Dark as Oblivion's frown, which hath their strength devour'd.

XXXVI.

Or rear a labyrinth in miniature,
For those who built that endless one of yore,
The ashes of twelve monarchs to secure,
And reptiles, which they reverenc'd even more—
It stood upon Lake Mœris' ample shore,
And near the Town of Crocodiles; so call'd,
Because such creatures they were prone to adore!
Its vistas vast, the wilder'd mind appall'd,
And by its serpent ways the feet were long inthrall'd!

XXXVII.

Twelve palaces, and each a wilderness
Of glory, rang'd round twelve halls, and containing
Rich rooms and cavern'd chambers numberless,
Where superstitious Solitude was reigning:
These were the wonders—still in part remaining—
For they exist in many a minstrel's song,
Whose spell, the frail works of the world enchaining,
Their fame to latest ages doth prolong;
Thus giving them a place, the gems of earth among.

XXXVIII.

Build for the dead! For Egypt's mighty, build!
Not for the living, less sublime than they—
Where are *their* pyramids; or are *they* skill'd
To make, like them, age after age their prey,
And bid the chariot wheels of time convey
Their venerable fabrics of renown—
Which yet endure, while realms around decay,
And on the wrecks of later labours frown—
Great, though impair'd, to unborn generations down?

XXXIX.

Build for the dead, then, for they built for fame,
That of their glory the full stream might run
Long parallel with time, till it became,
Like their own Nile, inferior to none
That have o'erflow'd the world since time begun,
Or shall, until the end thereof—for ne'er
Hath art, the labour of their hands outdone,
Whose towers of strength the young earth's marvel were,
And now the aged world's unequall'd wonders are!

XL.

Thebes was their work! Thebes of the hundred gates;
The Babylon of Egypt! Still there stand
Within it, palaces of unknown dates,
Immeasurable! and a countless band
Of sphinxes, gloomy as their native land,
Keep everlasting watch, where walks extend
Between unshaken columns, all as grand
As obelisks, which there to heaven ascend,
With temples, statues, halls, and glories without end!

XLI.

A dark enigma doth the Sphinx appear;
Genius of desolation form'd to be:
And to preside o'er regions waste and drear,
In mountain wilds, or by the lonely sea,
Or in dark caverns whence the living flee,
And dragons dwell, and dread chimeras sleep,
And things that would from mortal light be free;
Choosing to haunt the wild shores of the deep,
Where, round wave-riven rocks, the bellowing billows sweep—

XLII.

There should the Sphinx be placed—or lonely lie,
Awful and silent, on her native plains;
Where towns and temples once might cheer the eye,
But now where desolation only reigns,
And Ruin's banner waves on fallen fanes,
Borne o'er the deserts by the homeless wind;
Which, ever unto night, sings stormy strains,
As mourning deep for Œdipus the blind,
Who quench'd his sight to show the darkness of his mind.

XLIII.

The shepherd of some king of Corinth, found
Young Œdipus upon a branch suspended,
Belonging to a mountain tree—unbound
The weeping babe, who was by birth descended
From a then reigning king, though undefended,
Left thus to famish on a mountain high;
That so his fear-curs'd life might there be ended,
And give the famous oracle the lie,
Which had foretold, the father by his son should die—

XLIV.

And so he did: for lo, the stranger Queen,
The infant from her shepherd's hand received;
Who, growing up, knew not how he had been,
In early life, of regal right bereaved:
But finding after all his soul aggrieved,
To the Corinthian court he bade adieu;
For of his birth there was a tale believed,
Which soon unto a sland'rous story grew—
And, wand'ring forth from thence, his sire he met and slew!

XLV.

He knew not then, that in the hour of pride,
His father by his wrathful hand was slain;
But onward went to Thebes, and there he tried,
The riddle of the murd'rous Sphinx to explain:
Nor long the royal wand'rer tried in vain—
'Twas infancy, and manhood, and old age—
And thus the monster by his skill was slain,
Who dash'd her brains out in her witch-like rage!
But what ensued we leave upon the classic page—

XLVI.

Read me *this* riddle the great Sphinx propounds:
A tablet of rude writing she hath sent,[1]
Whose character of mystery, confounds
The learning of the age—Perhaps she meant
To tell us, that the time her vot'ries spent
For her, was labour lost; and that the wise
Of these more polish'd times, might rest content
With things less deeply hid from mortal eyes—
For in her service, still, but small advantage lies.

XLVII.

She was the child of some perverted thought,
The ill-form'd offspring of a goodly mind,
Whose native strength, with hard condition fought,
And strove in darkness, and alone, to find
A path to immortality, and bind
The memory of its struggle for a name
Around Time's brow, that it might be entwin'd
With the remembrance of its nation's fame,
When mightier works, grown old, should Egypt's strength proclaim.

XLVIII.

'Tis an Egyptian mystery, like its land,
Darken'd by fable; and in vain we strive,
The shrouded truth thereof to understand:
The form, its vanish'd meaning doth survive,
And from its own obscurity derive
A portion of sublimity, which leads
The soul into its deep design to dive,
Though from its ken the drift thereof recedes—
Pass on, for stream more clear the thirsting spirit needs.

XLIX.

Night have I seen, in cloudy robes array'd,
Draw beauty from the moon's transparent urn,
Which flung around an amber-colour'd shade;
An emblem here of Egypt I discern,
Stately as midnight, and as darkness stern;
Yet memory is a moon to her, to whom,
As to a fount of light, she still may turn,
And her disconsolate features re-illume—
But still 'twould be like moon-beams sleeping on a tomb.

L.

Egypt, of nations was the eldest born:
The legislator of the world, where first
Law sprang to light, and bless'd earth's second morn!
The land where Art a new-born babe was nurst!
Where sun-like Science into being burst,
Remotest ages to illuminate,
Deep in the waves of ignorance immers'd!
Mark now and mourn the hoary nations fate:
A den of slaves become, though once so wise and great!

LI.

Land of Osiris, Saturn's murder'd son,
Whose regions lie along the Great-Sea coast,
And reach unto those deserts, over-run
By the rude Arab's wild and warlike host!
Land of the dead! say where is now thy boast
Of twice ten thousand cities, once thy pride,
Yet dwindled to a tale, which hath almost
The rainbow glance of memory defied;
That daughter of the earth, and heaven's betrothed bride.

LII.

Darkness and light, in Egypt's history,
Are strangely mingled, and we marvel how
She could have school'd the native dignity
Which erst sat thron'd upon her lofty brow,
So that her spirit should descend to bow
To things that creep on earth, and homage pay
To forms of meanest creatures, such as now
No land within the human eye's survey,
Is base enough to laud with one ignoble lay.—

LIII.

Not far from hence, a broken altar stands,
Whereat a mutilated figure kneels,
Supporting it with both uplifted hands;
Whilst, on the top, an ill-shap'd stone reveals
The object worship'd, and the spirit feels
Indignant at idolatry so base;
For lo, a sightless beetle's form appeals
For adoration to a heav'n-born race,
So fall'n, that they could thus defile earth's holiest place!

LIV.

This altar, to the scarabeus rais'd,
The depth defines of human nature's fall:
Well might the Grecian's loftier soul be prais'd,
Which on an unknown god was wont to call,
When thus Egyptian darkness doth appal,
By reason of it's depth, the astonish'd mind!
Strange folly this, most marvellous to all,
However to religion's glory blind,
That in such worship vile, man's soul should pleasure find!

LV.

Standing among these marble wrecks, the soul
Recalls the history of this land to view,
Through which the waves of seven-mouth'd Nilus roll;
Where reign'd the kings, that labour'd to subdue
The ancient fathers of the wand'ring Jew,
Whose nation, now extinct, in after-time
Into a great and warlike empire grew;
And, ere they fell from this their height sublime,
Fill'd ages with their deeds of glory or of crime.—

LVI.

Upon Grand Cairo's rock a castle stands,
Wherein is Joseph's well! Oh, tearful thought,
If such it be: for where are those, whose hands
The work thereof so marvellously wrought?
And where is now that glory gone, which brought
Surrounding nations to their land for bread,
When their young Hebrew ruler was besought
By starving realms, from Egypt's store-house fed,
To take their sons for slaves, who else must join the dead!

LVII.

Fall'n art thou, Egypt! Nations proud and strong
Have sprung up on the earth, and been renown'd
For works that live in many a minstrel's song,
Since thou wast monarch of all nations crown'd!
And these are lost in darkness most profound,
Whilst Egypt lives—or rather lies alone,
Like a fall'n giant, grov'lling on the ground,
Beneath the Moslem tyrant's trembling throne,
Sapp'd by its subject's blood, and weak from violence grown!

LVIII.

Nile was not young three thousand years ago,
When, in a rushy ark, a new-born child
Slept by his side, unconscious of the woe
Felt by its race, to slavery exil'd—
When to his stream, where grew the weed-grass wild,
Pharaoh's dark daughter with her damsels came,
And saw the waken'd babe, which on her smil'd,
As if the royal virgin's love to claim—
That first bright step which led to Israel's peerless fame!

LIX.

A shepherd in the Midian wilderness,
His father's flock the future prophet fed;
Thence was he summon'd forth by God to bless
His people, when from Pharaoh's hand they fled—
Thus David in a shepherd's tent was bred,
Ere he was call'd to conquer Israel's foes:
And thus the Lord of life, for us that bled,
In humble sphere prepared to bear our woes,
And, from a borrow'd tomb, to God's right hand arose!

LX.

And Moses, laden with the weight of years,
Upon Mount Nebo took at length his stand ;
And, as the setting sun illumes two spheres,
His beaming eyes beheld the promised land,
And that wild waste where Israel's numerous band,
Ready for march, near Jordan's borders lay :
There his great soul received her last command,
And, in full glory, bore from earth away,
Calm as the evening light at close of summer day.

LXI.

Silent and soft, as from some moon-watch'd fountain,
In the still skies, descends the sphere-born dew,
The prophet's soul left Nebo's lofty mountain,
And to the regions of the blessed flew !
Not peaceful thus do all men bid adieu
To time's fair scenes, those types of things unknown :
And Egypt, whose remains we now review,
Once heard, appall'd, an army's dying groan,
When in the sanguine sea her hosts were overthrown.

LXII.

Hark! hark! I hear the bellowing roar,
As of two dreadful seas in full tide meeting,
Their billows bearing down the rocky shore,
Wave upon wave in wild commotion beating:
And there are thousand tongues for help entreating;
And cries of battle-steeds in tumult dying;
And shouts which struggling warriors are repeating,
Not vanquish'd by their foes, nor from them flying,
Yet grappling hard with death, and in strong torture crying.—

LXIII.

The clash of swords is heard, drawn out in vain,
And sheath'd in billows by their own blood dyed;
War-chariots sinking in the watery plain,
With glittering helms and armour are descried!
Swords, spears, and shields, toss'd on the foaming tide,
And ensigns floating on the boiling surge,
Aid not the men that Israel's God defied!
Thrice from the wild abyss their brows emerge,
And then the mingling waves ring on their funeral dirge.

LXIV.

Thy ten plagues, Egypt, now to mind I call:
Nile's waters changed into a bloody wave—
Swarms of vile reptiles o'er the land that crawl—
Ulcers and fiery biles on prince and slave—
And tempests, from whose wrath no arm can save—
Vast troops of locusts o'er thy coasts bestrown—
With darkness, deep and dreadful as the grave,
Into whose maw thy first-born sons were thrown—
And such feast, since the deluge, death hath never known!

LXV.

At midnight there were cries heard through the land:
Lovely princesses, with dishevell'd hair,
At palace gates were trembling seen to stand;
And humbler maids, struck speechless by despair,
Their dark eyes fix'd upon the vacant air,
Mourn'd in mute anguish for their brothers slain;
Each of the other's loss yet unaware,
Till timid day-light had return'd again,
To tell the havoc made in one night's murderous reign!

LXVI.

The terrors of that night, bow'd Pharaoh's head,
When God was by his heaviest judgment known:
He felt the Angel of Destruction's tread,
Who, passing, shook the harden'd monarch's throne:
He heard a shriek, as if a soul had flown;
And learn'd, commission'd Death had dealt his blow
On Egypt's first-born, and on them alone—
Then rose to let heav'n-guarded Israel go!
Ah, what will not God do for those his love that know!

LXVII.

There is a people, scatter'd wide indeed,
Yet from the mingling world distinctly kept—
Doth Egypt not remember Abrah'm's seed,
Though in the grave their glory long hath slept,
Since their last lord o'er falling Sion wept?
Ages ago, the Roman standard stood
Upon her ruins, yet have ages swept
O'er Rome herself, like an o'erwhelming flood,
Since down Jerus'lem's streets she pour'd her childrens' blood!

LXVIII.

And still the nation lives! So God ordain'd,
When his prophetic bards her downfall sung;
Yet no reward their tuneful warnings gain'd,
When their loud lyres with fiery vengeance rung:
Still to their idols rebel Israel clung,
And when Messiah came, their prince they kill'd—
Like demons on their nation's hope they sprung,
And thus the measure of their guilt was fill'd!
God! what a base whereon thy work of love to build!

LXIX.

Egypt shall fall, but Sion rise again
To glorious life, for ever to endure;
For lo, Jehovah's promise doth remain
Firmer than earth, as heav'n itself secure!
Yet, to the waters of salvation pure,
The thirsting Jews shall with the Gentiles throng—
But pause we here, nor let this theme allure
The muse to linger with these thoughts too long—
Time-laden Egypt claims the burden of our song!

LXX.

Memphis, a nymph, one of great Nile's dark daughters,
Gave name unto a city now unknown;
For years have o'er it swept, like mighty waters,
And all its palaces are overthrown:
Nor is there left one frail memorial stone!
Yet somewhere near the spot on which it rose,
The pyramids ascend to heaven alone,
Whose walls might well a nation's dead enclose;
And lo, at their vast feet doth wearied Time repose!

LXXI.

And yet their tops touch heaven, and terminate
As mountains do, each in a barren peak;
And the pale stars on evening's steps that wait,
Seem as their lofty summits they would seek;
And down their length'ning sides full many a streak
Of trembling light they dart, lost in mid air;
For, wearied with the distance, they wax weak,
And half way down stand still, as in despair,
Or as they sought the rest of those within to share!

LXXII.

These pyramid's, by art's rules unconfin'd,
Soar simply to the skies, yet do they seem
To rival the conceptions of the mind,
Begotten in its most unbounded dream!
Shap'd by the king of day's unfolded beam,
Like darken'd rays they meet the wond'ring eye;
Then stately upward to the heavens they stream,
And lose their dim points in the wounded sky;
Whilst round their belted sides the broken tempests die!

LXXIII.

The world may never more these works excel,
Nor *matter* give a form to thoughts so vast!
The art of man ne'er else hath fram'd so well
Structures of grandeur, promising to last
The lives of nations, some of which have pass'd,
Since first the firm foundations of these fanes,
Or temples of the dead from life outcast,
Were laid on Egypt's city-burden'd plains,
Whose graves outlive the glory of succeeding reigns.

LXXIV.

They're tombs wherein the proudest kings may lie;
And ev'n Ambition need no more desire,
Of all the fame that dwells beneath the sky,
Than thither after battle to retire,
And sleep in sepulchres which all admire,
And which may stand until the day of doom,
Nor lose one fragment, till the promised fire,
That will the elements themselves consume,
Makes the whole world appear one desolated tomb!

LXXV.

Man's soul's a star, a bright and wand'ring star;
A beautiful and brilliant satellite,
Which borroweth its glory from afar,
To cheer and charm the world! Yet oft from sight
Her lustre is conceal'd, and on the height
Of time, or pinnacle of fame, she stands,
Lonely and gloomy as an orbless night,
Till Death awakes, and, in his friendly hands,
Bears her from earth to be the light of other lands.

LXXVI.

These tombs, like beams of darkness, shadow well
The prison of the soul—that house of clay,
Wherein a little season she doth dwell,
Haunted by hope and fear, till call'd away
From thence by death, she leaves it to decay,
Mould'ring amidst the solitude of years!
The body is her caravansera,
Which soon the pilgrim quits for other spheres,
Seeking a place of rest beyond this vale of tears!

LXXVII.

The streams of Babylon were fill'd by night
With stars, which from the awful firmament
Seem'd to fall down in clust'ring drops of light:
And there the Chaldean shepherd spread his tent
Upon the brink, where all night long he leant,
Deep musing, o'er the silent water's breast;
And as he thus those watchful moments spent,
His soul was with the scatter'd stars a guest,
Ranging them in those forms her fancies deemed best!

LXXVIII.

It was a beauteous labour, thus to draw
Pictures with flying stars; and I have sought,
When midnight's silence fill'd my soul with awe,
To do the same; and at such time have thought
That, peradventure, pyramids were wrought,
As dark observatories for the dead,
By men, whose superstitious minds had caught
The notion, that the light those orblets shed,
Had charms to soothe the friends from them for ever fled:

LXXIX.

And that, within those mighty tombs reclining,
They still might gaze upon their native skies,
When suns and worlds by myriads were shining
Upon their otherwise death-curtain'd eyes;
But, that beholding *them*, they yet might rise
In dreams, at least, above this sunken sphere:
For, ah! when in her grave Affection lies,
And Love, lamenting, hopeless, lingers near,
The feeblest fancies then of countless worth appear!

LXXX.

The pyramids we leave, and fix our eyes,
On Egypt's obelisks of tall renown;
Like her vast tombs aspiring to the skies;
Like them outliving temple, tower, and town!
Time, that hath trampled royal cities down,
Hath pass'd them by, and some have even been
The pride of Rome since Cæsars wore her crown;
And there amidst her ruins are they seen,
Still towering from the earth, majestic and serene—

LXXXI.

Mark this black figure seated on the ground,
An ear of corn within her stony hand![2]
She was a goddess, worshipp'd and renown'd,
In some great temple of that mighty land,
Whose pyramids like giant genii stand,
Reigning o'er ruins spread out far and wide
Along a weary wilderness of sand—
Half to the grave, and half to earth allied;
Picture of mortal life, emblem of human pride!

LXXXII.

The hermit of the desert, ev'n old Nile,
Sire of an hundred streams that travel slow
Through the dominions of the crocodile,
And fill the alligators' baths—that flow
In regions where the noon-born winds that blow,
Are wing'd with fiery death—'tis Isis' tears,
Who for Osiris' sake is fill'd with woe,
Which have o'erflow'd Nile's urn these thousand years;
And in her father's halls, her statue still appears!

LXXXIII.

Daughter of Time! Idol of many names!
Cybele, Ceres, Venus! Thy renown,
The light touch of a minstrel's harp-string claims;
For when the world retires from Night's dark frown,
Then do thy smiles fall sweet as dew-light down,
And thou art call'd Diana! Then thy brow
Is circled with a planetary crown,
And to thy charms the young bard lisps his vow,
As one unto thy shade pays orisons e'en now!

LXXXIV.

And he doth muse upon the mystery,
Which overhangs thine undiscover'd tale:
"I am all that hath been, or yet shall be,
"And never mortal hath uplift my veil."
Such, where thine altars Egypt's sons still hail,
Is the dark sentence on their fronts engraved;
And there doth Turkish tyranny regale
On souls of men, by alien power enslaved,
Still as the world grows old, becoming more depraved.

LXXXV.

Thou wert the Ceres of that desert clime,
Where thy stern statues may be now adored,
By the weak offspring of thy parent, Time,
Dwelling in shadow, by the world deplored,
Though once above surrounding realms they soared,
Sublime in darkness, and in gloom still great:
Now fallen, never more to be restored
To the dread grandeur of their former state,
Which like a tomb outstands the memory of its date.

LXXXVI.

Fronting this statue may you see the head,
Of Orus her good son, who lent his aid,
To avenge the blood by barb'rous Typhon shed,
Ev'n his father's: and his people made
An idol of his name, and worship paid,
To him, as to a God; for they could ne'er
Give honour to a fallen hero's shade,
But he must of their adoration share,
And like a God be served with sacred praise and prayer!

LXXXVII.

Who can look on the fabled Queen, nor think
Of her, the Egyptian Venus, who beheld
Kings prostrate at her footstool, and whose drink
Was molten pearls! She whose dark beauty quell'd
The fire of conquering Cæsar, and compell'd
Triumphant Antony to be her slave—
Voluptuous Cleopatra! Who excell'd
In pride, and pomp, and power, the Roman brave,
And proud, ev'n unto death, dared an untimely grave!

LXXXVIII.

'Twas night in Egypt's history when she rose,
And in the style of Isis lov'd to dress;
Which was the ancient Dian some suppose,
So that the proud Queen, as we thence may guess,
Would shadow forth that she was sent to bless
Her land with moon-like glory, and upraise,
The shadows of its earlier happiness,
Entombed with the dreams of elder days—
It may be, too, she sought a more than mortal praise!

LXXXIX

Thus did young Alexander, when he taught
The oracle of Ammon to conspire
To lift his bloated fame to heav'n, and brought
Down on his daring head heav'n's deadly ire!
And others have indulged this dread desire,
Like Satan, when the Almighty's angry nod,
Plunged him and his into eternal fire!
Christ, Christ alone is worthy—He is God,
And rules the realms of heaven, though once on earth he trod!

XC.

He was a warrior, and a conqueror too,
Hell and the hated grave his desperate foes!
He triumph'd o'er the work he had to do,
And wrought out joy from unimagined woes!
His god-like labours, agonies and throes,
The blood he shed—not others, but his own—
Earn'd for his *enemies* a long repose,
Procured *them* pleasures, endless and unknown!
Rise, rise, my soul, for now He fills the Eternal's throne!

XCI.

Thought weeps o'er Egypt, once the wise, the brave;
Now fall'n the level of the world below!
Her fame is like the glory of the grave,
Into whose gulf, life's dregs for ever flow!
Time, though her founder, hath become her foe,
And o'er her flung the veil of slavish gloom,
Prophetic of a nation's overthrow!
Soon may the freed world write her finish'd doom;
Her realms destroyed, and left, a desert in their room!

XCII.

As when one casts a pebble to the sea,
So is a nation's downfall, when review'd
By the vast vision of eternity;
Of such an overpow'ring magnitude,
That the strong thoughts which dare thereon intrude,
Are in their very out-set paralysed,
And in their unworn strength at once subdued,
Ere of their bounded power they 're well advised—
Oh God! how should thy word by feeble man be prized!

XCIII.

Where immortality is brought to light,
Enabling the calm'd soul to gaze unquell'd,
Upon eternal scenes, though by the sight
Of long-lived glory, such as is beheld
In aged Egypt, she hath been compell'd,
Erewhile, to stand at mortal strength aghast;
Which, fed upon the fruits of time, hath swell'd
Into o'erwhelming visions of the past,
And, with a dream-like gloom, the mind hath overcast.

XCIV.

There is a deep solemnity falls down
Upon the soul, as ling'ring here, we think
Of the brief date of fleeting man's renown;
Wearing his time-born honours on the brink
Of dread eternity, and soon to sink
Beneath the shoreless waters of the dead,
From whose communion he is fain to shrink,
So long as he hath strength on earth to tread,
Or life, above death's stream, upholds his laurell'd head.

XCV.

The lovers' fountain is an empty tomb,[3]
So near are death and life; and the same things
May cheer the heart, or cloud the mind with gloom,
As from one source both pain and pleasure springs!
The soul is like a harp of many strings,
Whereon the skilful hand of Memory plays:
One touch, the mournful recollection brings
Of heart-wounds giv'n by grief in former days;
Another, doth the forms of joys departed raise!

XCVI.

Now, fallen Egypt, let me build thy tomb:
The pyramids themselves might form thy grave,
But I would have it in a vale of gloom,
Most like some ancient giant's haunted cave,
Where solemn trees o'er slumb'ring Nile should wave,
Within the hearing of a cataract's roar,
Sounding like ocean when his billows lave
The rough rocks round some tempest beaten shore,
Making a mournful sound for ever evermore.

XCVII.

One stone from one great temple should be there,
Plunged in the stream, yet o'er its surface seen:
And thereon, as an emblem of despair,
A sphinx might lie, a crown her paws between,
Sole relic of thy sway; and she might lean
O'er the dead waters, still as midnight's noon,
And thus reflecting dim her sullen mien,
Dark as the brow of an eclipsed moon,
When nature faints for lack of her accustomed boon!

XCVIII.

And here the hoary land we leave, whose fame
Hath been familiar with the world, since time,
Forth from the deluge like an iris came,
Beauteous as youth, yet lonely and sublime,
Discumber'd of the weight of human crime
And ready to renew on earth his reign—
Musing upon the fables of this clime,
Our thoughts, the ear of pondering man to gain,
Have wound themselves into a melancholy strain—

XCIX.

Of mirth there could be none, for Egypt teems
Alone with death and darkness, and displays
The world's vain glory; and to us it seems
No weakness though we now should seek to raise
Our souls on high, where Hope's sweet eye surveys
Realms of pure loveliness and spotless bliss,
Inhabited by those that love the praise
Of him who saved them from hell's dark abyss—
And now one thought for such, and thus the theme dismiss.

C.

Life is the twilight of eternal day,
The soul its morning star ; and death's dark shade
Is but a cloud which soon will break away,
And then the soul will be again display'd
All in a brilliant robe of light array'd!
Near her lov'd Lord she 'll take her shining stand,
Singing most gladsome melodies, in aid
Of the blest anthems of heav'n's joyful band,
Welcoming souls of saints into their goodly land!

END OF CANTO II.

NOTES TO CANTO II.

STANZA 46.

"Read me this riddle," &c.

Alluding to the tablet of hieroglyphics found in front of the great Sphinx.

STANZA 81.

"Mark this black figure," &c.

A figure of Isis. She is represented sitting on the ground, with her arms resting upon her knees, and in front of the figure is the head of Orus.

STANZA 95.

"The Lover's Fountain is an empty tomb."

The Sarcophagus, so called by the Turks at Grand Cairo, where it was used by them as a cistern.

THE SLAVE,

AND OTHER

Poems.

Art thou called being a slave? care not for it: but if thou mayest be made free, use it rather.

For he that is called in the Lord, being a slave, is the Lord's freeman.

PAUL TO THE CHURCH IN CORINTH.

LONDON:

PUBLISHED BY TAYLOR AND HESSEY,

93, FLEET STREET,

AND 13, WATERLOO PLACE, PALL-MALL.

1824.

Cave, Printer, Islington.

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ERRATA.

Page 23, stanza 44, line 4, for *makes* read *make*.
Page 38, line 4, for *unseen to* read *concealed from*.

The Slave.

I.

THE Slave! Hark! now I hear the sounding lash,
Far louder than his agonizing cries:
As, from the scourge, gash after ghastly gash,
Spills his hot blood beneath the burning skies.
Lo, lo, he dies! the shrieking victim dies!
Slain by his master's merciless command!
See where in dust his quivering body lies,
Whilst o'er him still his slaughterer doth stand,
And from his mangled corse scarce stays his bloody hand.

II.

Driven from the world, he scarce can find a grave;
Unless, by night, some trembling comrade steals,
To where yon rocks o'erlook the cavern'd wave,
And there his brother's gory frame conceals—
Awake! awake! The Negro's blood appeals
To Heaven and Earth, for vengeance on the head
Of him, whose heart no indignation feels
When thus that blood by Power's red hand is shed:
Whose every drop still lives, a witness for the dead!

III.

I heard the Negro, on his couch of straw,
When rankling wounds denied his eyelids sleep:
I heard him ask, by what unrighteous law
The oppressor bore him o'er the billowy deep,
And left him in a foreign land to weep?
No friend was near to lend his soul relief;
Moaning he lay, condemned alone to keep,
The midnight vigils of consuming grief;
Driven to the dreadful hope, that life might prove but brief.

IV.

He looked in anguish for the lingering morn
To call him to his toils as heretofore;
And oft he cursed the moment he was born,
And oft, despairing, named his native shore,
And the loved scenes he must behold no more;
And thought upon the golden hills and plains,
That all the year their summer garments wore;
Where the wild birds still sung their mellow strains,
Sipping the sparkling dew, which Heaven at evening rains.

V.

There had his savage youth been thoughtless spent,
Free as the wild beasts of his favourite chase,
When over Afric's pathless plains he went,
Join'd with the warriors of his sable race.
There had he learn'd with them the steps to trace
Of the large lion, on his den-bound way;
Fearless to rouse him from his dreadful place,
And hold the angry forest king at bay,
Till, fall'n beneath his spear, the dying monarch lay.

VI.

Oft in the even, when the sun was set,
And the fair-featured moon walked on her way,
These roving children of the desert met
Round their rude huts, to dance till dawning day!
And there he oft, with spirits light and gay,
Mingled, delighted with the mirthful band;
Or sought, with one he lov'd, in peace to stray,
Hard by some stream, or near the wave-washed strand;
Where they might rest unseen, or wander hand in hand.

VII.

Know ye the power of music-breathing love—
How it doth make the human heart to glow;
Kindling desires that fain would soar above
To purer scenes, no change or end to know?
Behold, it is the same with all below,
Whether its heaven-born influence be known
In the cold regions of uncheerful snow,
Or on the hot plains of the torrid zone—
By Negro in his hut, or Prince upon his throne!

VIII.

There was a cry heard of distress and fear,
And his wild people saw him not again;
The Man-hunter's infernal crew drew near,
And bore him, pinion'd, o'er the moon-lit main:
There, as he floated on the briny plain,
And to his early love his young heart clung,
Loudly he raved, but raved, alas! in vain;
For they, who on their prey like beasts had sprung,
Cared not with how sore pain his sever'd soul was wrung.

IX.

He lay in torture on the vessel's prow,
Looking upon the fast receding shore;
The sweat-drops standing on his swollen brow,
By mental anguish, forced from every pore;
He heard the loud dash of the seaman's oar,
The moaning of the glittering waves around—
He heard, or thought he heard, a voice implore
Her lover's help, and started at the sound,
Then rais'd a fearful shriek, to find his limbs fast bound.

X.

Oh, Nature! strong art thou in every breast,
Binding the heart to earth with countless ties;
And the dark Slave, by cruel bands oppress,
Reveals thy power beneath the Indian skies!
Long, long it must be, ere remembrance dies,
Of home-bound pleasures, howsoever rude;
And dire the struggle, witness'd by his cries,
Before his free-born feelings are subdued—
Ere, crush'd by strong despair, they never more intrude!

XI.

He died away into delirious sleep,
And dream'd that to the maid's relief he flew;
And when he woke, far o'er the widening deep
He found he had been carried by the crew.
Strange scenes he now was called upon to view,
Down in a slave-ship's suffocating hold;
Where fiery fevers their scorch'd victims slew,
Alike the ungrown youth and warrior bold;
Whilst living, dying, dead, in rank confusion roll'd.

XII.

He saw the conflict of all passions there,
With the black train of life-consuming woes—
Fury and fear, and multiform despair;
Curses and screams, and agonizing throes!
Some calling loud for vengeance on their foes;
Others more deeply moaning their dread doom,
Praying that Death's lean hand might interpose,
To snatch them from a worse than living tomb;
That in unfathom'd graves their bodies might consume.

XIII.

Daily the sea devoured the envied dead,
Into her jaws without contrition thrown:
And some were given her, ere life had fled,
And from her trembling seat the soul had flown:
These heavily sunk, with one convulsive groan,
Into the cavern of the deep profound;
Whilst bubbling billows for a while made known
The place wherein those dying men were drown'd—
But soon these swept away, and silence reign'd around.

XIV.

Without was peace; but war within prevail'd—
The strife of spirits struggling with despair!
For threats, and oaths, and torturing scourges, fail'd,
Silence to claim midst those assembled there:
They were oppress'd beyond what men may bear;
And, driven to madness, death itself defied—
They even *longed* the hopeless end to share,
Of those whose blood the murderer's hand had dyed,
And disappointment felt, this hideous boon denied.

XV.

There were death-shouts, and ceaseless cries for water;
Now fainter heard, now stronger, as at first;
Most like the tumult on a field of slaughter,
Where rampant Death is dared to do his worst,
And, in new blood, to slake his endless thirst.
The angered ship-men knit their swarthy brows,
And in amongst their cargo oft-time burst,
Striving their suffering victims to arouse,
With threats of deadly hue, and blows, and vengeful vows.

XVI.

All was in vain: as if a man should go,
Into a lazar-house, devoid of skill,
And seek by wounds to heal a madman's woe;
Or with hard words a vacant heart to fill!
All was in vain; the slaves remained still,
By anguish arm'd, of *Death* the least afraid:
With ardour, which the hottest rage might chill,
They dar'd the drawn sword's sharp and shining blade,
And curs'd the gain-bound hand, the lifted steel that stay'd.

XVII.

At length the Negro, thus for weeks immured,
Beheld the light, and breathed the air again;
Not to exult in liberty secured,
So long denied him on the pathless main;
On shore he looked for mortal friend in vain;
The multitude unpitying pass'd him by,
Without one kindly glance to soothe his pain,
Or care to listen to his deep-breath'd sigh—
None bade him lift his soul and look for help on high.

XVIII.

Amidst his fellow-men unown'd he stood,
Like a scathed sapling, by the sun unblest,
Whose beams erst cheer'd his early solitude:
But he had been so long a dungeon's guest,
That now the light of heaven his eye opprest,
And pain'd his dazzling sight; scarce could he bear
The brilliancy of day, and his stiff breast,
Expanded by the fresh and beauteous air,
Ached, as if from their bones, the tendons parting were.

XIX.

But still it was a change from what had been,
Since his afflicting bondage was begun;
Here was an altered, though a bitter scene,
And a black change is better borne than none,
Where there are soul-consuming woes to shun,
And pains and tortures, hard to be sustain'd
By Nature, when her sternest mood is won!
And thus this captive's grief was half restrain'd,
When the vile place of sale, his shackled feet had gain'd.

XX.

One son of pride, by wealth, not worth, made proud,
The price demanded for his body, paid;
But, as he led him through the heartless crowd,
The sullen Negro saw his captive maid!
Then first his soul its native fire display'd,
And in the rage of love he burst away;
But fetter'd soon, and from all hope convey'd,
Down in the dust in blank despair he lay,
Until his owner came with whips the wretch to flay.

XXI.

Is Slavery the child of Time, or did it spring
Among the rebel bands from heaven that fell?
Where, in his gloomy strength, the demon King
Reigns o'er the regions where his angels dwell—
The burning mounts and fiery plains of hell!
When was it first upon this world beheld,
That men, like brutes, their fellow-men should sell;
That, by the strong, the weaker being quell'd,
Should for their tyrants labour, by the scourge compell'd?

XXII.

When was the first slave? Who on earth can say?
Perhaps the scene of his despair was laid
In that wild world the deluge wash'd away,
Where every crime was found that could degrade
The soul of man; and power, perchance, was made
Alone the arbiter of life; in chains,
Binding the helpless, until God survey'd
The dire disorder on earth's groaning plains,
And swept man from his world, to Death's unblest domains.

XXIII.

I heard that Negro, on his bed of straw,
Thus rack'd in soul, thus tortur'd in his frame,
I heard him ask, by what ensanguin'd law
The hand of Power such mastery could claim!
Oft he repeated one heart-cherish'd name,
Whilst deep within his breast, in that same hour,
Revenge was burning, like a smother'd flame,
Ready to rise, anon, with hellish power,
And in its calm black rage, it's victim's life devour!

XXIV.

Now tell me where Philosophy may find
A remedy, to be at once applied,
For healing such a desolated mind,
To which the light of art hath been denied,
And all that is to mental worth allied!
Say to what quarter we may look for aid,
When a dark soul by darker grief is tried!
Where hope hath pined to death within the shade,
By ills of sudden growth, and rank luxuriance, made!

XXV.

There came a man from some far distant isle,
Proclaiming to the world the reign of peace;
Telling the slave, that yet a little while,
And he might dwell where all his toils should cease,
Where love and joy for evermore increase!
And pointing out how best he might upbear
Against those ills from which he sought release—
Revealing to him, that he should repair,
In Christ's thrice hallowed name, to God, in secret prayer!

XXVI.

He open'd up the wonders of the cross
Before the stricken slave's admiring soul,
Till unto him, the world appear'd but dross,
And down his cheek the tear in silence stole!
Till his new joy he could no more control,
But lifted up to God his grateful voice.
Whose mercy would his humble name enrol
With theirs, who in his presence aye rejoice,
And who of old were led to make his ways their choice.

XXVII.

Yet while he thus was filled with glorious joy,
His outward lot unchanged in aught remained;
Save that his owner sought ev'n more to annoy
His victim, for the hope he had obtained:
For lo, the master's restless soul was pained,
His slave's ennobled nature to behold—
Seeing the peaceful strength his mind had gain'd;
Not to be moved, or bought with mines of gold—
The inwrought peace of God, which cannot be controll'd!

XXVIII.

The Negro, in the arts of men unlearned,
In heavenly lore by God himself was taught;
Trampled to earth, and as an outcast spurned,
By those whose gold his very blood had bought,
His soul with blessings from above was fraught,
Through Him whose life to save the world was given;
To whom, on wings of faith-elated thought,
He soar'd, and dwelt with, in his promised heaven,
Where saints for ever reign, who from the world are driven.

XXIX.

He was a slave still, but his soul was free,
Clothed in the liberty of light divine:
From which all forms of mental darkness flee,
Like night-shades, when the morning sun doth shine!
And he was heard no longer to repine,
Though rugged was the pathway to his grave;
For well could he earth's poor delights resign,
The which his untumed heart had ceas'd to crave,
Since he had learn'd of Him who died his soul to save.

XXX.

Time came, when that the malice of his foes
Christ's minister of peace to him denied;
Whereby they sought the door of hope to close,
And quench the light on which his soul relied:
They tore his Saviour's herald from his side,
But the divine Redeemer still was there;
And though the servant as a martyr died,
The mourning slave enjoyed the master's care,
Of whose unwearied love his faithful followers share!

XXXI.

Man is a spirit for awhile confined
Within a tabernacle built of clay:
There visited by Him, whose skill designed
This dwelling, destined erewhile to decay,
Yet beautiful as is the living day,
Whose eye illumes its walls: but from this place
Man passeth like a broken dream away—
Wak'd up not far from his Creator's face,
Somewhere within the vast untravell'd realms of space.

XXXII.

'Tis then, if not till then, that he discerns
The mystery of his being, which is more
Than now it doth appear; for there he learns,
That powers were given him wherewith to soar
Beyond this sphere of vision, and adore
His Father, God, who sent his only Son,
To lead his spirit tow'rds that blissful shore,
Where everlasting glory is begun,
By those, who through his death, Faith's great reward
have won!

XXXIII.

I heard that Negro, on his lowly bed,
Thus forced to bid to earthly hopes adieu:
I heard him pray for mercy on the head
Of him, whose bitter wrath his brother slew!
Lonely he lay, but still the sufferer knew,
That more than this his heavenly master bore,
When on the cross, expos'd to public view,
His dying breath forgiveness did implore,
For those whose hellish hate was glutted with his gore!

XXXIV.

Slave-masters! such is pure Religion's power!
These are the morals Christ's disciples preach!
Let interest alone, then, rule the hour,
And still this gospel will your servant's reach!
Shame! that it should be needful to beseech
A British subject, in these polish'd days,
To let a godly man draw near, and teach
His heathen household, Britain's God to praise,
And train their souls to walk in Wisdom's pleasant ways!

XXXV.

O ye who wear free England's royal name,
Mark! Upon slavery hath been conferr'd
An immortality of dreadful fame!
Say, what is comprehended in that word,
To fill up which, hard avarice hath concurr'd
With the worst passions of the human soul!
Within it lie, all that the ear hath heard,
Of blighted love, and grief that spurns control,
Affections blotted out, and lives o'erwhelm'd with dole!

XXXVI.

Name ye the gain this fearful cost affords,
Beyond the curse which God to crime decrees!
Men may be gay around their jovial boards,
And drown the cries of truth, whilst health and ease
Renew to life its transient power to please:
But pleasures fly, nor leave a trace behind;
And how shall they those troublous thoughts appease,
Which never fail to haunt the guilty mind,
When on the couch of pain, by strong disease confined!

XXXVII.

Let death draw near—The warrior stern may die,
And pour his soul out on a gory bed:
But on what couch shall he, the oppressor, lie,
Who oft the blood of innocence hath shed?
Where shall the Man-slayer rest his throbbing head,
Whose heart by fiery lust of wealth was sear'd?
How shall he bear to shake hands with the dead,
With whose red life his palms are yet besmear'd;
Whose tongue, with curses scorch'd, the mourner never cheer'd?

XXXVIII.

There stands an angel near the Eternal's throne,
Whose roving eye this moon-like orb surveys;
Whose ear retains the sound of every groan,
Heav'd from the heart on which oppression preys:
His memory, immortal as his days,
Lays up a record of each lawless deed,
That will affright the soul when life decays—
When, from the toils of time, her wings are freed,
And forth, as swift she flies, she sees this world recede.

XXXIX.

Then will she read these records of the past,
And on unblotted guilt with horror pore:
Then will the soul upon her hope be cast,
And turn the pages of her annals o'er,
And every cruel act of life deplore:
Remorse will reign, and hope no light will shed,
Unless to Christ she hath been wont to soar:
But agonizing darkness will o'erspread
The ante-hells that hold the unredeemed dead!

XL.

Ah! what a fearful meeting will it be,
Between the tyrant and his tortur'd slave,
When they each others unrobed souls shall see,
Within the awful precincts of the grave!
My soul! How will the lordling spirit rave,
With those it spurn'd, by Death's strong fetters bound;
Made to lie down, nought near to soothe or save,
And helpless wait, till at the trumpet's sound,
The evil and the good, God's judgment bar surround!

XLI.

Then shall be seen the round earth cloth'd with fire,
And from their graves the wondering dead arise:
Then shall the sun, and moon, and stars, expire,
And vanish from the desolated skies:
Then shall be heard the death-imploring cries
Of blood-stain'd men, just driven from the tomb,
Imploring, that again their long-seal'd eyes,
Just opening on the tyrant's fiery doom,
Might close them in the grave's impenetrable gloom!

XLII.

Where shall the Oppressor flee? His victims graves—
These are the store-house of his treasur'd woes;
The ground that drinks the crying blood of slaves,
Which, unreveng'd by human justice, flows,
Shall to the world its dreadful trust disclose,
Upon the last—the pregnant judgment morn;
When they that in Death's silent halls repose,
Are, by the call of God, to life new-born,
Immortal praise to share, or everlasting scorn.

XLIII.

He who upon his brother's spirit treads,
Earns for his soul Heavn's never-failing curse:
And each proud nation, slavery o'erspreads,
The Lord of all will humble or disperse!
Let Rome arise, the pride of ancient verse,
The glory of the world in days of old:
Let her the history of her fall rehearse—
Hark! she proclaims that liberty was sold;
That Freedom's robes of light, in guiltless blood were roll'd!

XLIV.

Rome lies in ruins, like a crownless Queen,
Amidst the fragments of her fallen throne;
And the proud wrecks of glory which hath been,
Make but the force of her destruction known—
Say not the curse alights on her alone!
Thou, Gallia, tremble, lest thy plains, in turn,
Be with the relics of thy power bestrown—
Lest fire-arm'd Freedom should her danger learn,
And wake her slumbering ire, and bid her vengeance burn!

XLV.

Oh, Albion! the sea-encircled bower,
Where Liberty hath dwelt for many an age!
Sleep not, my country, while steel-hearted Power
War with the world's best interests may wage:
But seek to soothe men's spirits, and assuage
The rigour of their ills! He that complains
Of slavery—him point unto the page
Of everlasting truth, the which contains
The master's only hope, and their's who wear his chains!

XLVI.

Hail, Wilberforce! the Slave's unwearied friend!
Glory's fair light surround thy saintly head!
Hope's silvery form thy shining steps attend,
And when thy feet life's silent borders tread,
Peace, like an evening star, sweet lustre shed,
And smile thee into heaven! All hail to thee!
But loftier praise to Him, thy soul that led,
And call'd his honour'd servant forth to be
The agent of his will, which sets the captive free!

XLVII.

And ye whose voices have for years been heard,
Pleading aloud the helpless Negro's cause,
Blessings be on your truth-arm'd souls conferr'd,
And everlasting honour and applause!
Let not your energies decline, nor pause
One moment in your heav'n-observ'd career;
For lo, your fame already overawes,
Those heartless realms that Freedom's visits fear,
And tremble when they dream her angel form is near!

XLVIII.

Her army are ye! By your leader stand,
And with the work of liberty proceed!
Not Afric only, but full many a land,
Beneath tyrannic pride and lust may bleed,
If aught the triumphs of your arms impede:
The eyes of kings are on you! if ye fail,
The cause of Truth triumphantly to plead,
A thousand well-bribed tongues your fall will hail,
And henceforth ruddy Power o'er struggling Right prevail.

END OF THE SLAVE.

Poems.

Poems.

MISSIONARY HYMN.

At evening time it shall be light—Zechariah, Chap. x. V. 7.

The evening of the world is near!
The tongue of war is still'd!
And, lo! the promises appear
About to be fulfill'd!

The clouds that long the sun obscured,
Begin to break away;
And nations, from its light immured,
Now catch the kindling ray!

The Heathen sees this heavenly light,
And, starting from his sleep,
Hurls his old idol from his sight,
Into the wondering deep!

Pour out thy spirit, Lord of all!
Illumine every land!
Then shall each stubborn demon fall
Beneath thy mighty hand!

Ho, ye that labour for the Lord,
In lands yet dark as night!
Hear and observe this cheering word—
The evening shall be light!

A CALL TO PRAISE GOD IN THE SPRING.

Solomon's Songs—Chap. ii. V. 10, &c.

Happy the man who doth rejoice
In all the works of God:
Who lifts to heaven his grateful voice,
Whene'er he walks abroad!

He sees his loved Redeemer's hand,
In all the charms around!
In trees, that clothed with grandeur, stand,
Or flowers that strew the ground.

Rise up, my soul, and come away
From scenes of worldly care;
O'er hills and scented uplands stray,
And breathe the mountain air!

The winter's past, the rain is o'er,
  The flowers appear on earth,
The bright-green fruit buds, fill once more,
  The boughs that give them birth!

The blithe time of the singing bird
  Is even now at hand,
And the meek turtle's voice is heard
  Throughout the peaceful land!

Arise, my soul! The clouds dispel,
  The fields are fresh and gay,
The young vines give a goodly smell—
  Arise, and come away!

And we will join the woodland throngs,
  And cheerful anthems raise:
Mingle with their's, more grateful songs,
  In our Redeemer's praise!

SONNET.

Would that the unacknowledged praise were mine,
Unhonoured by a feeble age, to write
On lofty subjects with Miltonic might:
Ev'n in oblivion I would not repine,
But sing of God's free grace, and love divine,
Broad as the sun's immeasurable light,
Till Death me freed, and on my ravish'd sight
Burst Heav'n's great glory, where the righteous shine,
Like uneclipsed suns! Oh, when the day
Of selfish, shallow, vanity is o'er,
And from her face the veil is torn away,
Truth's star of fame shall rise to set no more;
And her once heedless foes, the light survey,
Then bow, and blush, and tremble, and adore!

THE GOSPEL HERALDS.

Some seek the west;
And in the ocean-isles,
Where summer ever smiles,
Proclaim eternal rest
To toil-enduring slaves,
Who hope for peaceful graves!
In Christ they call them to believe,
And many there are found, their message to receive.

Some wend their way
Towards the tawny east,
Where Brama's bigot priest
Doth freedom hold at bay:
Revealing to all casts,
The liberty that lasts
Beyond old Time's declining reign!
And some, on Indian shores, this liberty obtain.

On the hot sands,
'Neath Afric's burning sky,
Some have gone forth to die
Amongst the brute-like bands,
Whose roving tribes ne'er heard
God's everlasting word!
And some amongst this sable race,
Have had their harden'd hearts subdued by sov'reign grace.

And some have sailed
Into the southern sea,
And set the nations free—
For there hath truth prevailed!
The islanders have thrown
Away their gods of stone—
Their idols to the waves have given,
And serve the Lord alone, the God of Earth and Heaven!

Some, too, have died,
Upon the stranger's shore!
Their pilgrimage is o'er,
But still their works abide:
For not in vain they wrought,
When Jesus' praise they sought,
But the sown seed, He'll cause to spring,
And ages, yet to come, the promised fruit shall bring!

Ye saints, arise!
Depart, devoid of fear!
Behold! your Lord is near,
Whose presence fills the skies!
To lands remote, proclaim,
The glory of his name,
Assured that He your work will bless,
Since Earth's remotest bounds, Emmanuel must possess!

THE GLOW-WORM.

Be sure with cautious step ye tread,
When near the place ye pass,
Whereon the star-worm's light is shed,
Which nightly makes its lowly bed,
Beneath the blades of grass:
Else may ye chance to quench a beam,
As sweet as summer-evening dream.

The glow-worm's form, that shines between
Shrub-leaves, at close of day,
Emits a light of golden green,
Because the grass-inwoven scene,
Reflected in its ray,
An emerald tint of beauty lends,
That with its native lustre blends.

So when a soul, by nature light,
And gifted, sweet to shine,
By faith beholds the vision bright,
Of things unseen to mortal sight,
Celestial and divine:
It sheds a glory not its own,
A radiance to the world unknown!

The sun is glorious to behold,
The moon is lovelier still;
The stars, whose number ne'er was told,
Their countless charms at eve unfold,
Till heaven itself they fill;
And solemn midnight's deepest hour
Beholds the noon of beauty's power.

But lo! those sun-worlds that surround
The girdle of the earth,
And yon small worm that gilds the ground,
Where'er its tender light is found,
Alike received their birth,
From Him whose hand upholds the spheres,
Serene amidst the wreck of years!

THE SAINTS' EVERLASTING REST.

Hebrews—Chap. iv. V. 9.

There doth remain a place of rest,
Where weary souls are ever blest!
A world, where all their troubles cease,
Absorbed in everlasting peace.

Beyond the grave this country lies;
This land is far above the skies!
And when, on earth, their eyes they close,
The Saints within its bounds repose!

It is refreshed by living streams;
Illumined with Emmanuel's beams;
Eternal Spring around it smiles;
And nothing enters that defiles!

There faithful souls their Saviour meet;
And smiling friends each other greet!
Their sorrows past, their struggles o'er,
They meet with joy, to part no more!

Oh, for that faith, which will prepare
My soul, this promised rest to share:
That I may join the saints above,
And triumph in redeeming love!

THE END.

Cave, Printer, Islington.

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